



11 January 2022

Dear Parents / Carer

SPRING TERM JANUARY 2022 UPDATES

I hope that this email finds you and your families well. We have made a very good start to the start of term, and we are very grateful to parents and carers who supported the return to school lateral flow testing. A handful of students tested positive and are taking the necessary measures of self-isolating at home. The testing programme was a good step in helping our school community feel reassured and safe to return and resume learning and teaching. Further key dates for this month for your information are at the end of this letter.

It has also been noted by staff and members of the public, how smart our students are, wearing the full school uniform as they returned to school. Rooks Heath's students continue to uphold the reputation of a school with pride in the local community. Please share this information with your child so this may continue.

We were pleased to see that the majority of our students started the term with their masks readily available. However, on occasion a few masks end up being dropped or lost. Please note that although we have some stock of disposable masks on site, we find that student misuse and waste of the masks are reduced when they bring their own reusable masks. Students take more care of their reusable masks whilst reducing our carbon footprint at the same time. Therefore, we would like to ask all our parents and carers to ensure their children attend school with their own mask, preferably one that is washable and reusable. The consistent wearing of masks and the regular twice-weekly testing, mitigates against the transmission of the virus and will hopefully enable us to keep the school open.

Whilst we appreciate that there are some children with *genuine* exemptions from wearing a mask, for example those with asthma or children on the autistic spectrum, we have unfortunately seen some children claiming exemption and being supported by their parents when there is no justifiable reason. We would like to thank you for being firm with your children for both the wearing of uniform and masks as this acts as great support for the school in guaranteeing that we represent what our school mission stands for and embodying our On-TRACK values.

Masks and examinations:

Following the temporary reintroduction of face coverings in classrooms, the [public health guidance to support exams](#) was updated on Sunday 2 January. This guidance sets out that it would not ordinarily be expected that candidates and invigilators wear face coverings during exams and assessments, but only on arrival and departure. Both candidates and invigilators may wear face coverings if they wish to do so.

Call for qualified teachers:

Finally, you may have heard of the Department for Education's national effort to support face-to-face education in schools and colleges by securing staff to 'get back in the classroom'. If you or someone you know is a qualified ex-teacher of primary, secondary, or further education we invite you to consider getting back in the classroom. If you have some time to spare and would like to contribute to this initiative on a temporary basis, please click [here](https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/urgent-call-for-qualified-teachers) to find out information on what you need to do: <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/urgent-call-for-qualified-teachers>.



Winter Readiness:

During the winter season, it is important that we remind our families, about important health considerations and to keep each other as healthy and well as possible. Many individuals can be particularly susceptible to infections which increase over the winter months, such as seasonal influenza (flu), COVID-19 and stomach infections (such as norovirus). Thank you to all parents who are keeping any children unwell at home. Please remember that if your child genuinely has symptoms of flu like illness or diarrhoea and/or vomiting or any other infectious disease to keep them at home to get better and inform the school by calling the absence line. I wish you all good health in the meantime.

Key Dates:

Please note the following dates for information:

- Thursday 13 January onwards Year 11 Post-16 option interviews
- Tuesday 18 January Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening online via SchoolCloud
- Wednesday 19 January Whole Staff PD Day – School closed to students
- Tuesday 25 January Year 12 / 13 Parent Consultation Evening online via SchoolCloud
- Wednesday 26 January PTFA 6pm

Yours sincerely

Mrs Miriam Manderson
Headteacher